

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A fuel tank closure for closing off a filling channel comprising:

(a) a closure part movable between a closed portion in which an opening of the filling channel is sealed and an open position in which the filling channel is released in order to fill a fuel tank; and

(b) a drive unit comprising a motor driving said closure part.

2. The fuel tank closure according to claim 1, wherein said closure part sits on an edge of the opening to form a seal in the closed position, and is pivoted laterally relative to the filling channel in the open position.

3. The fuel tank closure according to claim 2, further comprising a compulsory guide guiding said closure part, lifting said closure part off the edge of the opening in an

approximately axial direction during opening of the filling channel, and subsequently pivoting said closure part laterally about a virtual pivot axis lying transverse to a longitudinal direction of the filling channel.

4. The fuel tank closure according to claim 3, wherein the virtual pivot axis lies near the filling channel.

5. The fuel tank closure according to claim 3, wherein the virtual pivot axis lies in front of the opening of the filling channel.

6. The fuel tank closure according to claim 3, wherein said compulsory guide comprises at least one connecting link guide that has two complementary parts comprising at least one groove and at least one tab that engages in the groove.

7. The fuel tank closure according to claim 6, wherein said at least one connecting link guide has two grooves in each of which a respective guide tab engages.

8. The fuel tank closure according to claim 6, wherein each of said at least one groove has a first segment that runs in a straight line in the axial direction, and a second arc-shaped segment that follows said first segment.

9. The fuel tank closure according to claim 3, wherein said closure part comprises a first edge segment and a second edge segment lying opposite said first edge segment, and said compulsory guide has means for fixing said first edge segment in place, in articulated manner, near a position in which said closure part assumes the closed position, while allowing pivoting of said second edge segment about said first edge segment during opening and closing.

10. The fuel tank closure according to claim 9, wherein said compulsory guide has an articulation part joined to said closure part on a first side, and mounted on a housing part, on a second side.

11. The fuel tank closure according to claim 10, wherein said articulation part comprises a wire stirrup

mounted in a hinge arranged on said housing part on the second side, and in at least one bore arranged on said closure part on the first side, said hinge and said at least one bore having parallel axes.

12. The fuel tank closure according to claim 2, wherein said closure part has a cap that fits onto the edge of the opening and two struts arranged laterally on the cap.

13. The fuel tank closure according to claim 12, further comprising a force absorption part arranged on at least one of the struts on which forces in an axial direction, for closing and opening the fuel tank closure, can be exerted.

14. The fuel tank closure according to claim 13, further comprising an axially movable thrust ring coupled to said force absorption part.

15. The fuel tank closure according to claim 14, wherein said force absorption part comprises a tab that

engages in a recess of the axially movable thrust ring, so that said closure part is articulated to pivot on said thrust ring.

16. The fuel tank closure according to claim 14, wherein said thrust ring has a thread for moving said thrust ring axially.

17. The fuel tank closure according to claim 1, wherein said motor comprises an electric motor.

18. The fuel tank closure according to claim 1, wherein said drive unit has a step-down gear mechanism.

19. The fuel tank closure according to claim 18, wherein said drive unit has a gear wheel that can be exteriorly driven using a key.

20. The fuel tank closure according to claim 1, wherein said motor has a drive shaft that lies parallel to an axis of the filling channel.

21. The fuel tank closure according to claim 14, wherein said drive unit drives a threaded pipe piece, said pipe piece being rotatable about a longitudinal axis of said pipe piece, said pipe piece surrounding said thrust ring and interacting with a thread of said thrust ring in order to move said thrust ring axially.

22. The fuel tank closure according to claim 1, wherein said closure part is connected with an outer door of a car body so that when said closure part is opened, the outer door is also opened.

23. The fuel tank closure according to claim 1, wherein said closure part is connected with an outer door of a car body, so that when said closure part is closed, the outer door is also closed.

24. The fuel tank closure according to claim 22, wherein said closure part has a projection that engages in a connecting link profile of the outer door.

25. The fuel tank closure according to claim 23, wherein the outer door has an electric button for turning on and off said motor.

26. The fuel tank closure according to claim 25, wherein the button is coupled with a central locking system.

27. The fuel tank closure according to claim 25, wherein the button is arranged so that it can be activated by means of pressure on the closed outer door.

28. The fuel tank closure according to claim 1, wherein said motor is controlled by means of a remote control.

29. The fuel tank closure according to claim 1, wherein said motor is controlled by means of a switch in an interior portion of a vehicle.

30. The fuel tank closure according to claim 14, further comprising a shutter that can be closed with a flap, said shutter being arranged in the filling channel and

limiting introduction of dispensing nozzles into the filling channel to dispensing nozzles having diameters no greater than a selected value.

31. The fuel tank closure according to claim 30, wherein said shutter that can be closed with the flap is arranged in said thrust ring.